



# NIGHT OF THE GARGOYLES

BY EVE BUNTING

ILLUSTRATED BY DAVID WIESNER

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**Gargoyle (GAHR-goil):** A waterspout in the form of a grotesque human or animal figure projecting from the roof or eaves of a building.

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**For Glenn, who admires gargoyles  
—E.B.**

**For Dorothy Briley  
—D.W.**

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come to life and frighten the night watchman.

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# NIGHT OF THE GARGOYLES



by Eve Bunting  
Illustrated by David Wiesner

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The gargoyles squat  
high on corners  
staring into space,  
their empty eyes unblinking









till night comes.





Then there is movement  
in the shadowy corners  
as the gargoyles creep  
on stubs of feet  
along the high ledges  
and peer,  
nearsighted,  
into rooms where mummies lie  
in boxes, long and thin  
as coffins, ribboned round  
with painted boats and figures  
dark as night.

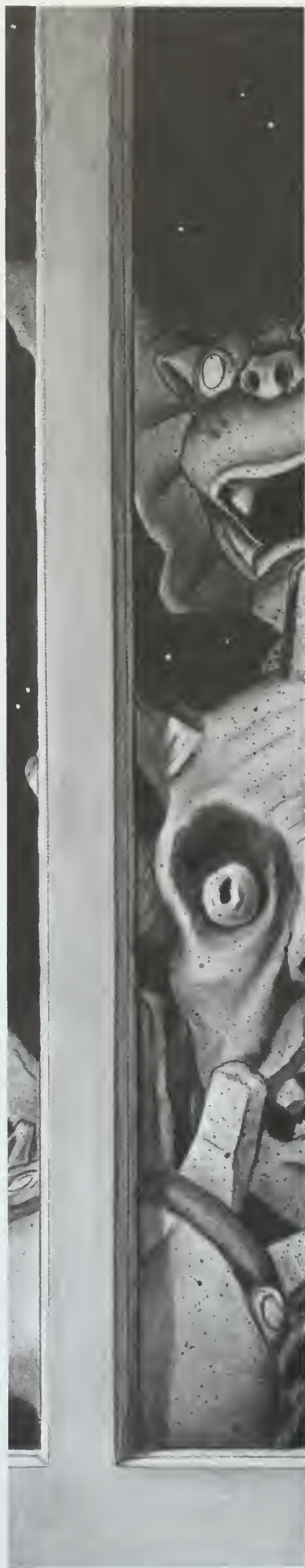








And gargoyle-creep again  
to gape at suits of armor,  
shining, stiff,  
the helmets hinged on eyes  
as bloodless as their own.





Or, tired of viewing,  
fly, if they have gargoyle wings,  
straight up to lick the stars  
with long, stone tongues  
green-pickled at the edges.  
Or land in sleeping trees  
to swing on branches, da-de-da,  
and feel the air move cool  
against their pockmarked stone.







Then down they swoop  
to where a fountain splashes dark,  
the water spitting from a cherub's mouth.  
They gargoyle-hunch around the rim  
and gargoyle-grunt  
with friends from other corners  
who have come for company.











They grunt of what they've seen  
and where they've been.  
How hot the corners  
when the sun is high,  
especially the ones beside the clock.  
How noisy, too.



They grump of summer passing  
and the rain  
that pours in torrents through  
their gaping lips  
and chokes their throats  
with autumn's leaves.

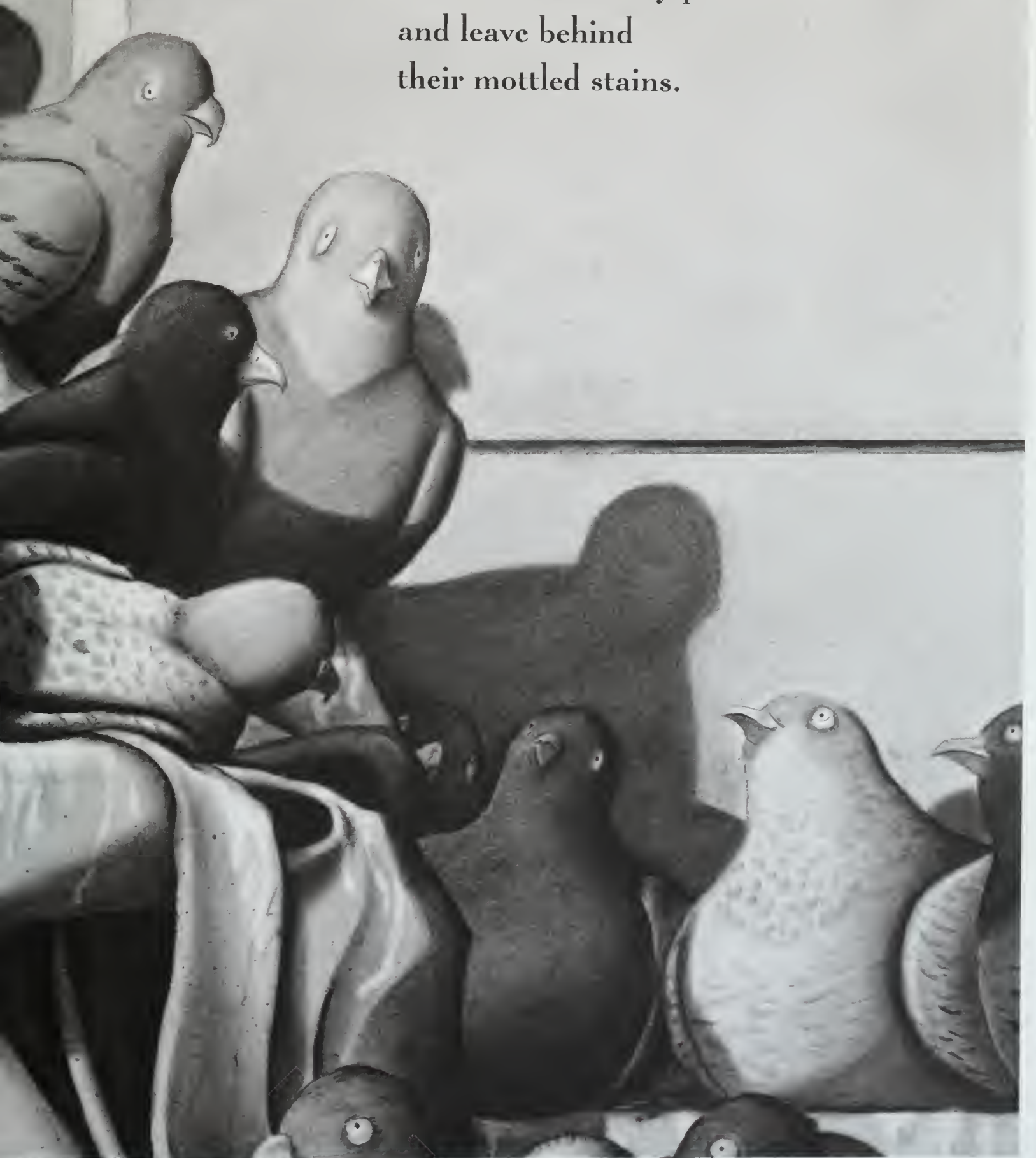








And then those birds  
that come to rudely perch  
and leave behind  
their mottled stains.





They lap the water  
with their mossy tongues,  
split-splat each other with their claws  
and boom those gargoyle laughs  
that rumble thick  
because there is no space  
inside their solid stone  
for laughs to somersault.









A watchman hurries by  
and checks the sky  
for thunder.

He's seen the gargoyles  
huddle there before,  
and once he told  
the man behind the frosted door  
and heard him snort his disbelief.  
"Gargoyles, indeed!  
You're seeing things."

So now he checks the sky  
to hide his fear.









The gargoyles rasp their wings  
and put their thumbs behind  
their crumbling ears  
to show their scorn.









They have no love of humans  
who have made them so  
and set them high  
on ledges  
where dark pigeons go.  
They stomp their feet  
and rumble-laugh  
to see the watchman close his eyes  
and turn away.

“Awk!” the gargoyles scream,  
and “Awk!” again,  
and spread their lips  
in mischief smiles.

The watchman hunches down  
and hurries on.





It's almost morning now  
and so the gargoyles fly,  
or wingless crawl  
up walls  
as spiders do.  
They take their corners  
quietly  
and stare  
and stare,  
their empty eyes unblinking





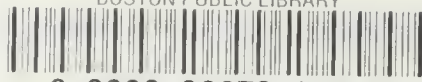
till night comes.







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★ "It's gargoyle gleefulness!"  
—**School Library Journal**, starred

♦ "Caldecott Medal-winner Wiesner's charcoal  
drawings are as breathtaking as Bunting's  
prose in this wildly successful attempt to  
prove what we've always suspected:  
The gargoyle lives."  
—**Kirkus Reviews**, pointer

★ "A haunting black-and-white picture  
book. . . . The gargoyles' impish, grotesque  
grins and 'empty eyes unblinking' are  
not easily forgotten."  
—**Publishers Weekly**, starred

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